

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR
BEACONSFIELD
URBAN DISTRICT
FOR THE YEAR 1921.



HIGH WYCOMBE :

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BEACONSFIELD URBAN DISTRICT.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BEACONSFIELD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—

I have the honour of presenting to you my twenty-first Annual Report on the sanitary condition and general health of the town for the year ending December 31st, 1921.

Having passed through the strain of the late War and the following period of financial pressure, economy and labour trouble gradually easing, I venture to hope for a continuance of local progress, which was so hopeful some few years back, when the district was a gradually increasing one. As you know, it consists chiefly of a residential population, the lower classes being engaged in agricultural, gardening, and general domestic pursuits.

There is no particular industry or occupation having a deleterious effect on the general health of the population. The amount of Poor Law Relief, Hospital, and gratuitous Medical Aid is small.

We are not a poor community as a whole, and there are many wealthy and generous inhabitants willing to help necessitous cases if brought to their notice through reliable channels.

Considering the excessive variations in the climatic conditions and the prevalence of North East winds, during the year, the general health of the town has been excellent.

The number of Infectious Diseases reported during the year has been few.

Sore throats were prevalent in July, but this was largely due to the continuous dry weather and dust.

There have been several cases of measles, but none have been of a serious nature, neither have any ended fatally. This disease is now not notifiable in this district.

Two cases of Scarlet Fever were reported. One was satisfactorily isolated at home, kept under strict observation, and no further spread of the disease occurred among the contacts. The other case was removed to a London Fever Hospital for private treatment.

Cases of Diphtheria were reported. A detailed report is given fully later.

On several occasions during the past years, as far back as 1911, the question of a Conjoint Isolation Hospital for general infectious diseases for South Bucks has been discussed, and meetings of the various Urban and Rural Districts' Delegates and representatives have met the officials of the Bucks County Council, both in London, Aylesbury, and Beaconsfield, but on all occasions the Scheme was thrown out by the majority of the districts concerned.

The methods of dealing with Infectious Diseases in this district are:—

I.—Isolation at home, when it is found to be safe and possible to do so.

II.—Removal to Isolation Hospital when unable to isolate satisfactorily at home.

III.—Diphtheria Anti-toxin, &c., supplied by the Council.

IV.—Disinfection of Rooms, Clothing, &c.

V.—The destruction of clothing, bedding, &c., used by the patient in certain particular cases, and compensation for the same.

VI.—Weekly returns of all infectious diseases to County Council and Ministry of Health on post card provided for the purpose, and the receipt of returns from surrounding other districts.

The Water Supply of the town is derived from the Amersham, Beaconsfield and District Water Company.

An analysis has been made from time to time, and has maintained its normal character and purity. There is about 19 degrees of hardness, due to the pressure of calcium carbonate; you will find that nearly all of the calcium is deposited on boiling. It is regrettable that the supply has had to be cut off for a certain time at night, which has caused considerable inconvenience to those who like a morning bath; but I understand it has been mainly due to the excessive dry season, and, indeed, our district has not been the only one throughout the country.

There are no rivers or streams in the district to become polluted, neither are there any manufactories, works, or other industries liable to pollute water from any source.

The population has been estimated at 3,512.

58 Births have been registered, one being illegitimate.

31 Deaths have been registered, and 3 under one year of age.

Birth rate per 1,000 population	10.6
Death rate per 1,000 population	8.8
Death rate for England and Wales	12.1
Birth rate for England and Wales	22.4

These figures show a low Birth and Death rate for Beaconsfield.

Causes of Death re Registrar General's Returns.

Tuberculosis	1
Diphtheria	1
Cancer	4
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	1
Heart Disease	5
Bronchitis	2
Pneumonia	1
Other Respiratory Diseases	2
Bright's Disease	2
Congenital Debility	2
Other Diseases	10

Table of Population and Death Rate for past 11 years.

Year.	Population.	Deaths.	Death Rate.
1911	2571	20	7.9
1912	2605	29	11.1
1913	2699	29	10.7
1914	2793	22	8.9
1915	3191	25	7.8
1916	—	28	9.0
1917	—	35	12.0
1918	—	—	7.9
1919	—	32	8.9
1920	—	27	7.2
1921	3512	31	8.8

Diphtheria.

The first case was reported on January 24th, when a swab was taken, and sent to the Clinical Research Association, London, and proved positive.

This case was injected with anti-toxin from the onset, but, despite all endeavours, proved fatal, the bacilli doubtless having descended downwards to the lungs.

This boy attended the Convent School, High Wycombe. I immediately got into communication with them, and asked them to send me a list of scholars from this district, which I received on the 27th January.

In February I was called to a contact case. Anti-toxin was injected, and a swab taken with a negative result.

On Feb. 23rd, 1921, a case was reported from the Convalescent Home. It was immediately removed to the Metropolitan Fever Hospital, and the room disinfected. This case had been visiting High Wycombe on her days out.

On Feb. 25th two cases of children in the same Institute were reported and removed to hospital.

On Feb. 27th another case was reported and removed to Hospital.

Doubtless these were contact cases. No further spread of the disease occurred.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

There has never been a strict Scheme established in Beaconsfield, with Crèches, Hospital, Home, Salaried Officers, Nurses, Health Visitors, provision for Home Nursing, &c. What has been done has been done voluntarily and honorary by the Medical Officer and Nurse Mossman, who has carried out her duties with the greatest satisfaction. Milk has been supplied in necessitous cases to children and mothers, both expecting and nursing; and reports have been made to the General Purposes Committee and Council from time to time.

Letters were received from the Ministry of Health, and replied to in March, 1921.

A Memoranda was received in April, rescinding the Order of 1919 and 1920, and a new Order to Local Authorities issued re Milk Supply, as from March 31st, 1921.

Despite the pamphlets issued by the Ministry of Health last year that Baby Shows were detrimental to the Child Welfare Movement, a Baby Week was held in London, and, according to reports, proved a great success. It has taught a lesson or two. The breast-fed child, under normal circumstances, has the best chance of a healthy progressive existence than the artificially fed one. It is the natural food of the child. But in order to come to this standard, we must also feed the mothers scientifically, and that can only be done in many instances by the help of Local Authorities and Pension Committees.

Another point is the healthy surroundings of the families by proper housing, sufficient air space, and good sanitary arrangements, and the assistance of trained persons to instruct the mothers in the training and well-being of the children.

It is now five years since the commencement of the Movement, and there has been a distinct fall in Infantile Mortality all over the country.

Cowsheds, &c.

The various Cowsheds have been inspected by your Inspector and myself at various times during the year, and Orders given for re-limewashing at intervals.

In August I received a complaint of suspected unhealthy milk from a certain source.

Your Inspector, Major Sarjent and myself, visited these particular Cowsheds, and found them in good order and well ventilated; the only thing needed was re-limewashing, Order for which was given and carried out.

The Dairy part was also in good order, and the cans, churns, &c., clean.

We overlooked the herd of 20, and I considered it advisable to have them vetted. I, therefore, arranged with Mr. Hancock, M.R.C.V.S., of Beaconsfield, to inspect and vet. the herd with me on August 12th, 1921. Mr. Hancock reported as follows:—

"I beg to report that all the cows in milk appear in excellent health. One Jersey shows signs of an old indurated udder, from which affected quarter no milk is obtainable. Two other cows not in milk, and due to calve shortly, also had indurated quarters. Whether these are of striptocal or tubercular origin, only T.B. test and microscopic examination can decide."

I therefore wrote to the owner, advising him to have the cows tested, both for his own benefit and that of the public. He refused, so I immediately instructed him to keep them apart from the others, which he promised to do.

This Milk question and the inspection of cows is a most important one for the protection of the health of the general public.

I have many times reported at length on this subject in the past, and must again urge on your Council to insist on a periodical examination and testing for tuberculosis of all Milch Cows supplying the inhabitants of this district with milk.

Slaughterhouses

Have been periodically examined during the year, found in good order, and regularly lime-washed.

Bakehouses

Have been regularly inspected, and found, both from a structural and cleanly point of view, very satisfactory.

Scavenging, &c.,

Has been carried out in a regular and satisfactory manner. I would urge that proper covers should be attached to the carts.

Drainage.

I am glad to know that more and more houses are gradually being connected to the sewer, thus reducing the objectionable cesspits.

In conclusion, this year, as last year, has been one of increasing amount of work for the officials of the Health Department. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Major Sarjent, your Inspector of Nuisances, for the assistance he has given during the past year.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ARTHUR H. TURNER,

Medical Officer of Health to the Beaconsfield
Urban District Council.

Leigh House, Beaconsfield.

Appended is Major Sargent's Report:—

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT, 1921.

This Return does not include work done under the Housing Acts.

I.—GENERAL.

Number of Inspections	117
Number of Complaints received	3
Nuisances detected without complaint	32
Notices served, 15. Formal, 15. Informal, 2 ...	32
Nuisances abated—	
(a) By persons responsible	32
(b) By Council	Nil
Summonses taken out	Nil
Convictions	Nil

II.—HOUSE NUISANCES.

Roofs repaired	Nil
Spouts cleaned and repaired	Nil
Pavements repaired	Nil
Overcrowding abated	Nil
Dirty Houses cleansed	Nil
Other house defects remedied	Nil

III.—DRAINS, W.C.s, &c.

Drains cleansed, repaired, or ventilated	3
New drains laid	1
W.C.s constructed	1
W.C.s repaired	1
W.C.s supplied with water (formerly without) ...	Nil
Earth closets, Privies, repaired	Nil
Cesspool constructed	1

IV.—WATER SUPPLY.

Houses supplied with water (formerly without) ...	Nil
Sample of water analysed ... good ... bad ...	Nil
Cisterns cleansed, repaired	Nil
Wells cleansed, repaired	Nil
Wells closed	Nil

V.—FOOD.

Seizures of unsound food (details separately) ...	Nil
Surrenders of unsound food (details separately) ...	Nil

VI.—SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Number on Register	3
Number of inspections	30
Number of defects found	2
Number of defects remedied	2

VII.—BAKEHOUSES.

Number on Register	4
Number of inspections	44
Number of defects found	1
Number of defects remedied	1

VIII.—DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILK SHOPS.

Number of Dairy-men or Purveyors of Milk on Register	3
Number of Cowkeepers on register	3
Number of inspections	69
Number of defects found	1
Number of defects remedied	1

IX.—FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Number on register	8
Number of inspections	64
Number of defects found	Nil
Number of defects remedied	Nil

X.—VARIOUS.

Visits to infected houses	15
Houses disinfected	15
Other items, e.g., Common Lodging Houses, Canal Boats, etc.	Nil

Local Government Board Table.

STATEMENT required by Article V of the Housing (Inspection of Districts) Regulations, 1910, in regard to the inspection of dwelling houses, under Section 17 (1) of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909-1920.

Number of houses inspected under and for the purpose of the Act	16
Number of such houses which were considered to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	Nil
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which representations were made to the Local Authority, with a view to the making of Closing Orders ...	Nil
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made by the Local Authority	Nil
Number of dwelling houses, the defects in which were remedied without the making of Closing Orders	3
Number of dwelling houses which, after the making of Closing Orders, were made fit for habitation	Nil
Demolition Orders made	Nil
Number of houses demolished	Nil
Number of houses in which defects were remedied by Local Authority, and costs recovered	Nil
Number of houses in which defects were remedied by local Authority, and costs not yet recovered	Nil

GENERAL CHARACTER OF DEFECTS FOUND:—

(a) Drainage defects	Nil
(b) Closet accommodation (insufficient or defective)	Nil
(c) Water supply exposed to pollution	Nil
(d) Insufficient circulation of air	Nil
(e) Dampness	3
(f) Insufficient light	Nil
(g) Dirty by tenant's default	Nil
(h) Dirty by landlord's default	Nil
(i) Insufficient paving	Nil

(j) Defective methods of refuse disposal	Nil
(k) Internal structural defects	3
(l) Defective roofs, gutters, and down pipes ...	3

ADOPTIVE ACTS.

Infective Diseases Prevention Act, 1890	Yes
Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Pt. 3	Yes
Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1870 ...	Yes

BYELAWS.

Slaughter Houses	Yes
Common Lodging Houses	Yes
Houses let in Lodgings	No
New Streets and Buildings	Yes
Water Supply	Yes
Cleansing of Footways	Yes
Removal of House Refuse	Yes
Cleansing of Privies	Yes
Prevention of Nuisances	Yes
Keeping of Animals	Yes
Offensive Trades	No
Tents, Vans, &c.	No

REGULATIONS.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops	Yes
Water Supply	No
Public Conveniences	No

MAJOR H. SARGANT,

Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances.

